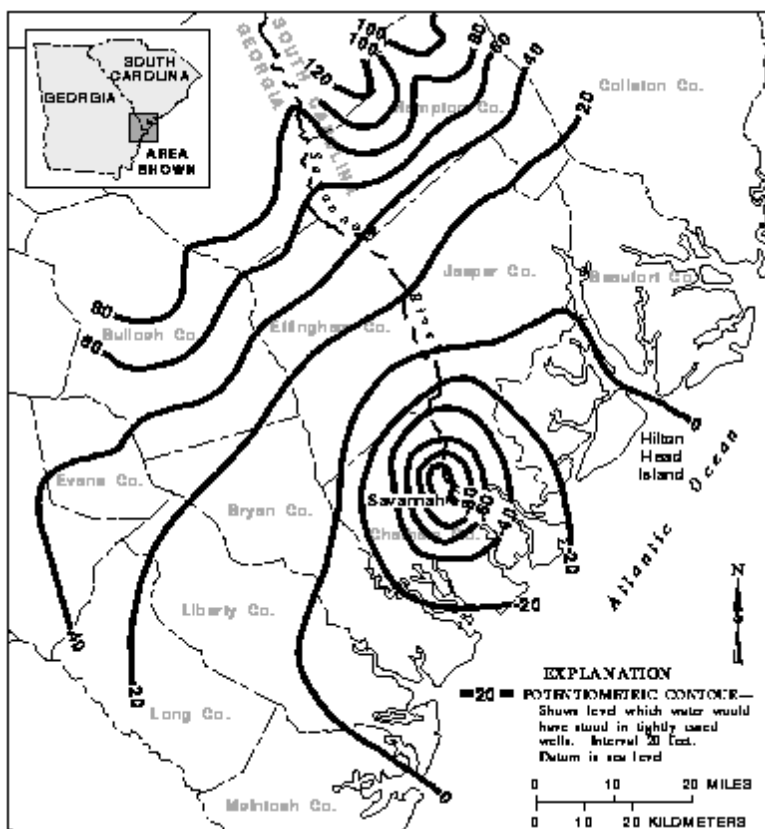


# BUREAU OF WATER

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

## Capacity Use Program Permitting

A guide for permitting groundwater withdrawal in designated Capacity Use Areas



February/2005



South Carolina Department of Health  
and Environmental Control

[www.scdhec.gov/water](http://www.scdhec.gov/water)

# Preface

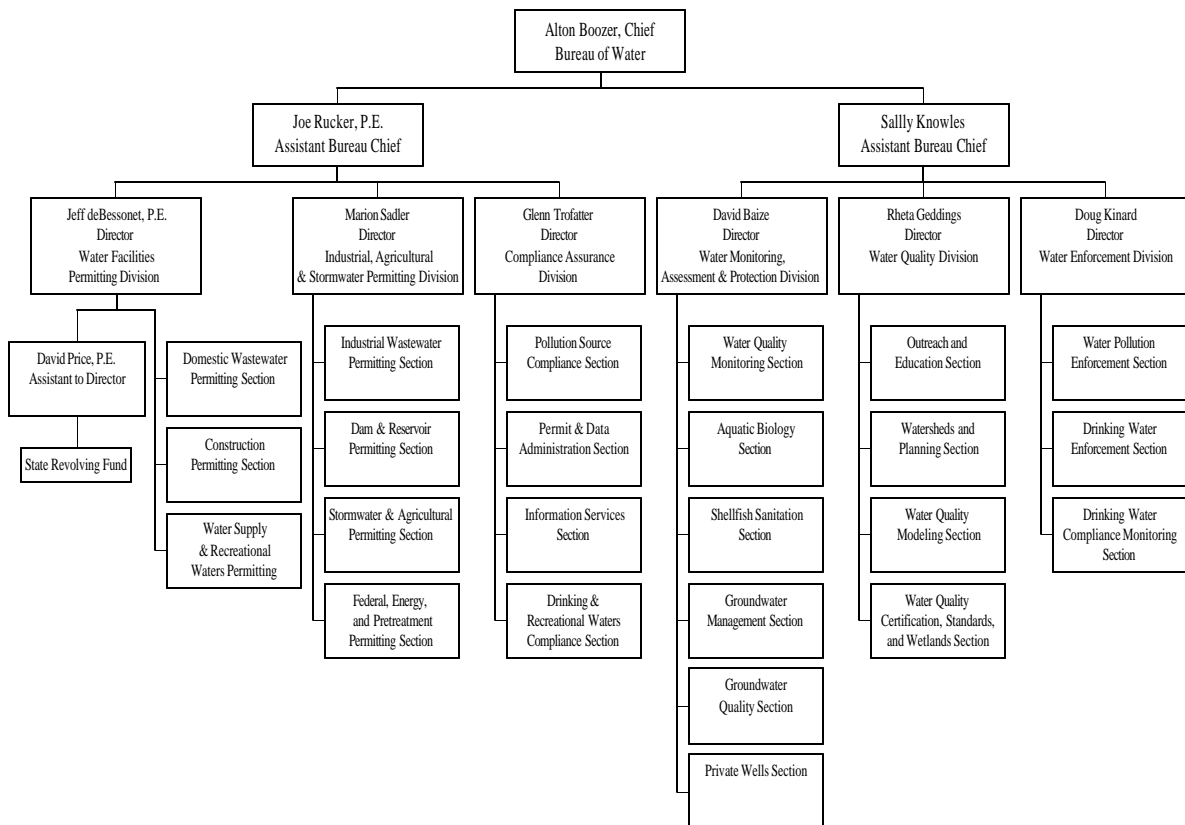
This document has been prepared for use by consulting engineers, developers, industries, and public entities dealing with Capacity Use Permitting program issues. It provides:

- ⇒ An overview of the Bureau's responsibilities
- ⇒ A summary of regulatory requirements
- ⇒ Identification of the entities involved in permitting, and
- ⇒ Highlights of the review and approval procedures.

We hope this document will help everyone have a better understanding of the Capacity Use Permitting program. Through this understanding, we feel it will be easier to go through the administrative process, technical reviews, and approval processes of the Bureau.

This document provides an explanation of the Bureau's decision-making processes. Our decisions are made based on the technical, administrative, and legal aspects of the Capacity Use program with the protection of the environment and public health as the major considerations.

The Bureau is committed to providing quality service in a reasonable time in all aspects of the permit programs. To do this, we need the cooperation of all parties who deal with us in recognizing our responsibilities and the manner in which we implement them. Therefore, please take the time to read this document carefully. This document is not a replacement for the regulations on Capacity Use programs and groundwater withdrawals. If you have any questions, please let us know. We welcome any comments you may have on this document or suggestions on how we can improve our service to you and the public.





# Why?



*Why is DHEC approval needed for groundwater withdrawal in Capacity Use Areas?*



*It is required by state law/regulations to help ensure that proposed groundwater withdrawal does not interfere with area wide uses and requirements.*

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South Carolina's Groundwater Use and Reporting Act (Title 49 Chapter 5) provides the legal authority and mandate for DHEC to establish and implement an effective statewide groundwater management program. Where groundwater withdrawals present potential adverse effects to the natural resource or pose a threat to public health, safety or economic welfare or where conditions pose a significant threat to the long-term viability of a groundwater source, a Capacity Use Area may be designated. Within designated Capacity Use Areas, groundwater withdrawals or proposed groundwater withdrawals in excess of three (3) million gallons per month (in any month) must be permitted by and reported to the Department. The following counties are currently in designated Capacity Use Areas:

**Beaufort, Colleton, Jasper (Low Country)**

**Georgetown, Horry (Waccamaw)**

**Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester (Trident)**

**Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marion, Marlboro, Williamsburg (Pee Dee)**



# Where?



*Where do I apply for a permit?*

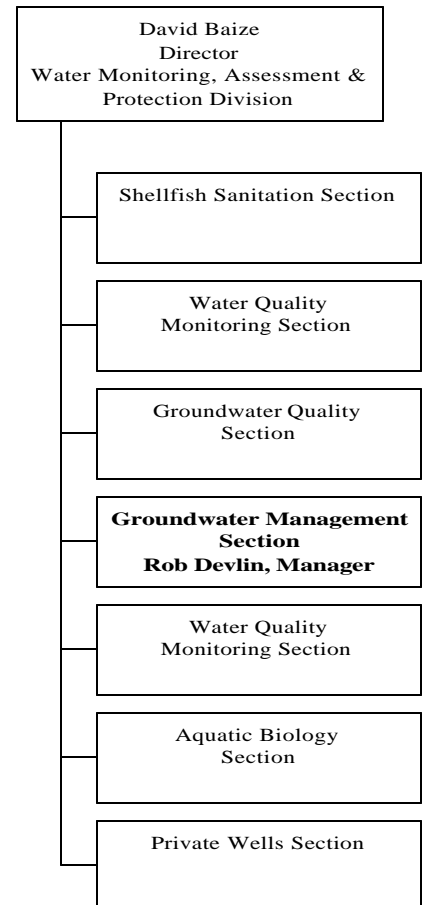


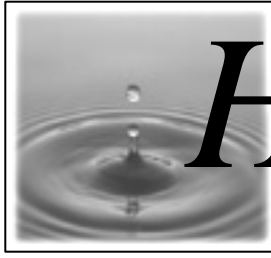
*DHEC's Bureau of Water is responsible for  
Capacity Use Permitting:  
2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201.*

The Bureau of Water (Bureau) is under the Office of Environmental Quality Control (EQC) of DHEC. The Bureau is responsible for protecting the quality and quantity of the state's surface and groundwater and ensuring safe drinking water for the public. To meet this responsibility, the Bureau issues permits, approvals, and certifications for a variety of wastewater and drinking water projects. This guide explains the permitting procedures of the Bureau for the Capacity Use Permitting Program.

## WATER MONITORING, ASSESSMENT & PROTECTION DIVISION

The Water Monitoring, Assessment & Protection Division handles this permitting responsibility for the Bureau. Applications are found on the Department website at [www.scdhec.gov/water](http://www.scdhec.gov/water). Applications should be directed to the Groundwater Management Section for review. Permit review status can be directed to either the project manager or the section manager.





*How do I apply for a permit?*



*An applicant should supply DHEC with a completed application for Groundwater Withdrawal Permit and all attachments.*

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The following identifies the process for obtaining a groundwater withdrawal permit in the designated Capacity Use Areas:

#### **New Permit (Construction)**

- Completed application submitted to the Department. Application is administratively reviewed for completeness. Incomplete applications will not be technically reviewed until all information requested is provided.
- Initial technical review conducted to determine reasonableness of proposed withdrawal limits and adequacy of the groundwater well design for the intended purpose. Discussions with applicant on proposed withdrawal limits and/or design, as necessary.
- Public notice wording is prepared by Department and provided to applicant. Public notice must be placed in a newspaper of general circulation in the area for a minimum of 1 day. The public notice provides a thirty (30) day comment period for all interested parties.
- Expiration of the comment period. All comments are considered and, if appropriate, a public hearing on the application may be scheduled. Discussions with applicant on comments, as necessary.
- As appropriate, a **Construction Permit** is issued to the applicant, valid for one (1) year, for installation of the proposed groundwater well. This permit will contain specific conditions and data requirements for submittal to continue the groundwater withdrawal permit review.
- Submittal of well construction details and appropriate technical data, as required by the **Construction Permit**, to the Department. Final technical review completed.
- As appropriate, issuance of **Final Groundwater Withdrawal Permit** to applicant.

## Permit Renewal

- Completed application submitted to the Department. Application is administratively reviewed for completeness. Incomplete applications will not be technically reviewed until all information requested is provided.
- Initial technical review conducted to determine reasonableness of continued or proposed withdrawal limits. Discussions with applicant on proposed withdrawal limits, as necessary.
- Public notice wording is prepared by Department and provided to applicant. Public notice must be placed in a newspaper of general circulation in the area for a minimum of 1 day. The public notice provides a thirty (30) day comment period for all interested parties.
- Expiration of the comment period. All comments are considered and, if appropriate, a public hearing on the application may be scheduled. Discussions with applicant on comments, as necessary.
- As appropriate, issuance of ***Final Groundwater Withdrawal Permit*** to applicant.

## Permit Modification

(proposed changes to an existing permit, including increase withdrawal limits, new well construction, change in ownership, etc.)

- Completed application submitted to the Department. Application is administratively reviewed for completeness. Incomplete applications will not be technically reviewed until all information requested is provided.
- Initial technical review conducted to determine reasonableness of continued or proposed withdrawal limits. Discussions with applicant on proposed withdrawal limits and/or design, as necessary.
- Public notice wording is prepared by Department and provided to applicant. Public notice must be placed in a newspaper of general circulation in the area for a minimum of 1 day. The public notice provides a thirty (30) day comment period for all interested parties.
- Expiration of the comment period. All comments are considered and, if appropriate, a public hearing on the application may be scheduled. Discussions with applicant on comments, as necessary.
  - If required, a ***Construction Permit*** is issued to the applicant, valid for one (1) year, for installation of the proposed groundwater well. This permit will contain specific conditions and data requirements for submittal to continue the groundwater withdrawal permit review.
  - If required, submittal of well construction details and appropriate technical data, as required by the ***Construction Permit***, to the Department. Final technical review completed.
- As appropriate, issuance of ***Final Groundwater Withdrawal Permit*** to applicant.

## Temporary Permit

The Department may grant a temporary groundwater withdrawal permit for a maximum of 180 days (or until a final decision is made on an application) if:

- An imminent hazard to public health exists.

- An applicant demonstrates that physical or financial damage has or will occur if a temporary permit is not issued.

The issuance of a temporary permit does not guarantee issuance of a ***Final Groundwater Withdrawal Permit***.

### **Notice of Intent**

(for all existing groundwater withdrawers or proposed groundwater withdrawers outside of a designated Capacity Use Area but within the ***Coastal Plain***)

- A groundwater withdrawer or proposed groundwater withdrawer outside of a designated Capacity Use Area in the Coastal Plain shall notify the Department of its intent to construct a new well or increase the rated capacity of an existing well at least thirty (30) days prior to initiating the action.